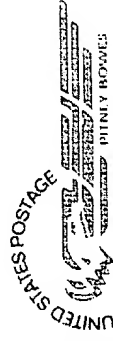


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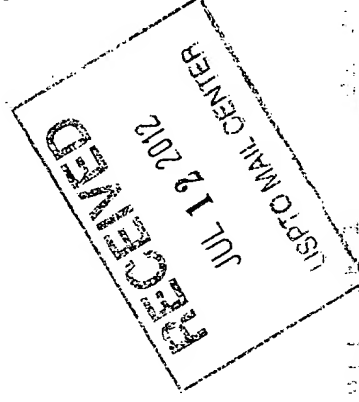
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DEC 07 2010

In re Patent No: 6,149,684
Issue Date: November 21, 2000
Application No. 08/951,690
Filed: October 16, 1997
Attorney Docket No. 5488.1313718

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

ON PETITION

This is a decision in response to a petition filed November 23, 2010, under 37 CFR 1.378(c), to accept the unintentionally delayed payment of a maintenance fee for the above-identified patent.

The petition is **GRANTED**.

This patent expired on November 22, 2008, for failure to pay the 7 ½ year maintenance fee. Since this petition was submitted within twenty-four months after the six-month grace period provided in 37 CFR 1.362(e), the petition was timely filed under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.378(c).

The maintenance fee is hereby accepted and the above-identified patent is reinstated as of the mail date of this decision.

It is not apparent whether the person signing the statement of unintentional delay was in a position to have firsthand or direct knowledge of the facts and circumstances of the delay at issue. Nevertheless, such statement is being treated as having been made as the result of a reasonable inquiry into the facts and circumstances of such delay. In the event that such an inquiry has not been made, petitioner must make such an inquiry. If such inquiry results in the discovery that the delay in paying the maintenance fee under 37 CFR 1.378(c) was intentional, petitioner must notify the Office.

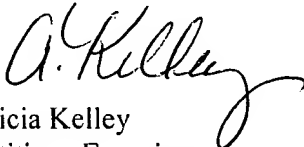
There is no indication that the person signing the petition was ever given a power of attorney or authorization of agent to prosecute the application. However in accordance with 37 CFR 1.34 (a), the signature appearing on the correspondence shall constitute a representation to the United States Patent and Trademark Office that he/she is authorized to represent the particular party on whose behalf he/she acts. If the person signing the petition desires to receive future correspondence regarding this application, the appropriate power of attorney or authorization of agent must be submitted. A courtesy copy of this decision is being mailed to the person signing the petition; however, all future correspondence regarding this patent will be directed solely to the above noted correspondence address currently of record.

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Petitioner will not receive future correspondence related to maintenance fees for the patent unless a "Fee Address" Indication Form (see PTO/SB/47) is submitted.

Telephone inquiries concerning this decision should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-6059.


Alicia Kelley
Petitions Examiner
Office of Petitions

cc: ROBERT EPSTEIN
EPSTEIN AND GERKEN
1901 RESEARCH BLVD STE 340
ROCKVILLE, MD 20850